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ABSTRACT

This handbook accompanies a videotape that shows teenagers stressing community involvement, motivation, and the rewards of community action. The booklet is to assist agencies and schools in developing coalitions for youth engaged in community service, to help build better citizens and healthier communities. The booklet is divided into: (1) "Introduction to Youth Activity and Reflection Sheets"; (2) "Tips for Facilitators"; (3) "Acknowledgments"; (4) "So What Do You Think About Service?"; (5) "Reflecting on Today's Heroes (videotape)"; (6) "Who Are Your Heroes?"; (7) "Your Community and You"; (8) "Community Service or Service-Learning?"; (9) "Developing a Service Project Roadmap"; and (10) "Let's Create a Talk Show!" (EH)

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HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE BECOME TODAY'S HEROES

YOUTH ACTIVITY AND REFLECTION SHEETS

ED 392 731

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INTRODUCTION TO **YOUTH ACTIVITY** AND **REFLECTION SHEETS**

Every young person has the potential to become a Today's Hero and the video can be a powerful tool to assist you in helping young people reach that potential. To facilitate your use of the video as a tool we have created a series of activity and reflection sheets. Some sheets are tied directly to the video and offer opportunities for young people to reflect on key issues and concepts raised in the video. Other sheets suggest a process or activity you can take the young people through to assist them in getting involved in service or reflecting on service.

A few tips to using the activity and reflection sheets:

- These sheets are offered as suggestions. Please modify them to fit your needs. We have, whenever appropriate, suggested variations to the questions and activities outlined.
- We have provided Facilitator Versions and Youth Versions of each sheet. Both may be copied for educational purposes.

Reflection

Before we go on we would like to offer a few words about reflection. In order for a young person's service experience to be meaningful, whether part of the classroom or extra curricular, time for reflection is essential. Reflection provides the needed opportunity for young people to process their service experience and make sense of what they are doing, why they are doing it and the impact their service is having on themselves and their community. It also provides an opportunity for young people to learn from their service experience.

When structured time is provided to reflect on their service, young people do more than provide a needed service; they grow on a personal, social and intellectual level. Reflection helps young people think about the personal challenges they faced in their service experience: how it made them feel, what they learned about themselves, what they learned about other people's circumstances, and what else they can do. Reflection also helps young people think about the larger community: what their civic responsibility is, what kind of resources exist in their community and why social problems exist.

The following activity and reflection sheets used in conjunction with the *Today's Heroes* video offer some creative ideas for engaging the young people you work with in getting the most out of their experience.

Introduce the topic of reflection to your class or youth program by using the metaphor of a mirror. When you look into a mirror you see a reflection or image of your

For more ways to generate reflection see *Today's Heroes in the Classroom*.

continued on back

face. Think about the service experience by looking back, reflecting and remembering the things you learned about yourself, others and your community. Think about the service experience by asking young people what their expectations are, what they think they will encounter, and how they will feel.

Using the Activity and Reflection Sheets

Have the young people you are working with watch the video to stimulate discussion about volunteering and the role young people can play in community problem solving; use the video as a pre-reflection tool before going out to do a service project; use the video to jump start the young people you work with to develop their own service project.

The activity and reflection sheets can be a way for students to think about the video and express their personal ideas. It will help you as a teacher or an agency understand what the young people are thinking. Explain that these sheets are not exams on which they are being graded; there are no right answers. They are designed to encourage deeper understanding and self-examination and expression.

For other ideas on activities you can conduct with youth see *Today Heroes in the Community* and *Pivotal Force: The Power of Youth Allies.*

Activity and reflection sheets included in this booklet:

- So What Do You Think About Service?
- *Reflecting On Today's Heroes*
- Who Are Your Heroes?
- Your Community And You
- Community Service Or Service Learning?
- Developing A Service Project Roadmap
- Let's Create A Talk Show

There is a Facilitator Version and Youth Version of each activity and reflection sheet.

What is a Facilitator?

Facilitators help focus the discussion of a group by inviting people to talk, creating trust, and providing support and affirmation. Facilitators must be open to and aware of what's going on in the group. Their goal is to help the group, and the individuals in the group, to learn and develop.

What Facilitators Do

The facilitator's job is to:

- support people
- create a trusting atmosphere to relax the group
- clarify comments
- listen and question

They must be willing to work hard, and to take risks. They guide by asking thoughtful questions, and by summarizing. Facilitators help groups and individuals learn from their experiences.

Specific appropriate behaviors of a facilitator include, but are not limited to:

- asking open-ended questions
- getting everyone to participate (drawing out quiet members)
- periodically summarizing discussion
- staying quiet sometimes and waiting for a response
- repeating back to someone what they heard them say to build understanding or clarity
- looking attentive and interested
- managing disagreements (focusing on issues, not personalities)
- keeping the group on track
- supporting group members equally

What Facilitators Do Not Do

Specific behaviors a facilitator should avoid include, but are not limited to:

- pushing their own agenda, or assuming that they have the "right" answers
- avoiding topics, downplaying ideas or refuting people
- controlling the group
- permitting "ganging up on" any individual
- taking sides

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This resource was developed by the National Youth Leadership Council and written by Sally Criticos, and Cynthia Scherer of The Points of Light Foundation. We would like to thank the following people for their input in the development of these activity and reflection sheets:

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FACILITATOR VERSION

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT SERVICE?

Facilitator Instructions:

This worksheet can be used by teachers or agencies to elicit young people's attitudes and opinions about service prior to watching the video or participating in a service activity. In addition to asking young people to respond to these statements in writing, this worksheet can be used to stimulate discussion on some of the topics mentioned. For more information on service as a learning tool see *Today's Heroes in the Classroom.*

1. **Providing service to your community is a responsibility. Why or why not?**

2. **Service will only have an impact if it is ongoing. Why or why not?**

3. **Service is about helping the less fortunate. Why or why not?**

4. **Service can be a learning tool. Why or why not?**

5. **Everyone should be required to do service. Why or why not?**

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT SERVICE?

Instructions:

People have many opinions about service and its role in our society. Please respond to the following statements. Indicate why you do or do not agree with each statement.

1. **Providing service to your community is a responsibility. Why or why not?**

2. **Service will only have an impact if it is ongoing. Why or why not?**

3. **Service is about helping the less fortunate. Why or why not?**

4. **Service can be a learning tool. Why or why not?**

5. **Everyone should be required to do service. Why or why not?**

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REFLECTING ON *TODAY'S HEROES*

Facilitator Instructions:

This series of questions can be used to stimulate discussion on topics and concepts highlighted in the *Today's Heroes* video. You can have young people respond individually in writing or have them discuss the questions in small or large groups.

1. **The *Today's Heroes* video highlights four different young people who are doing service in their community. What message do you think the video is trying to send? Why do you think this message is important?**

2. **Why do you think this video is called *Today's Heroes*?**

3. **Which young person—Pedro, Juanita, Hope or Tony—did you relate to most closely? Why did you pick this person?**

   Remind Youth: Pedro led his friends in painting over graffiti in his neighborhood. Tony volunteered in a homeless shelter. Juanita ran a multicultural organization called SHADES and made friends with an inner-city girl who needed encouragement. Hope helped handicapped children and volunteered to help a younger child who needed a trusting friend.

4. **Have you ever volunteered to help someone? How did you feel about doing it? If not, would you think about doing it now that you've seen the *Today's Heroes* video?**

REFLECTING ON *TODAY'S HEROES*

Instructions:

You have just seen *Today's Heroes*. Please respond to the following questions.

1. **The *Today's Heroes* video highlights four different young people who are doing service in their community. What message do you think the video is trying to send? Why do you think this message is important?**

2. **Why do you think this video is called *Today's Heroes*?**

3. **Which young person—Pedro, Juanita, Hope or Tony—did you relate to most closely? Why did you pick this person?**

4. **Have you ever volunteered to help someone? How did you feel about doing it? If not, would you think about doing it now that you've seen the *Today's Heroes* video?**

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WHO ARE **YOUR HEROES?**

Facilitator Instructions:

One of the major ideas highlighted in the video is that anyone can make a difference and that anyone can be a hero. This activity can be conducted individually, in small groups or in a large group. Think about varying the format you use, for example, ask the young people to answer question #1 individually, then have them share their answers in a large group setting. For question #2, have them answer in a large group brainstorm.

1. **What is your definition of a hero?**

   Variation: Put the word hero in the middle of a piece of paper and have the young people map out words that help them define a hero.

2. **Who do you recognize as heroes in everyday life?**

   Remind Youth: These may be relatives, athletes, school friends, business leaders, teachers, etc...

   Variation: Have the young people write letters to heroes they have identified to thank them for being heroes and explain why they are their heroes.

   Variation: Have a hero recognition or celebration. Ask the youth to invite heroes and tell why that person is a hero. Provide the invitees with a "Thanks for being a Hero" certificate, have skits, sing songs, give a slide show and more as part of the program.

3. **What qualities do you value in these people?**

4. **Did any of the youth profiled in the *Today's Heroes* video share these qualities?**

5. **Have you ever been a hero in some way? When? What did you do? How did it influence you?**

WHO ARE **YOUR HEROES?**

Instructions:

One of the major ideas highlighted in the video is that anyone can make a difference and that anyone can be a hero. Respond to the following questions about what a hero is and who your heroes are.

1. **What is your definition of a hero?**

2. **Who do you recognize as heroes in everyday life?**

3. **What qualities do you value in these people?**

continued on back

4. **Did any of the youth profiled in the *Today*'s *Heroes* video share these qualities?**

5. **Have you ever been a hero in some way? When? What did you do? How did it influence you?**

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YOUR **COMMUNITY** AND **YOU**

Facilitator Instructions:

While it is important for young people to understand how service affects them, it is also important for them to understand how their service can affect the community. The following questions and activities can help stimulate the young people you work with to think about their community, what they would like it to be and how they can help make it that way. These questions or activities can be done individually, in small groups or as a large group.

1. **What is your dream or vision of the perfect community or neighborhood?**

   Variation: Provide young people with paper, markers, and other art supplies and have them draw or visually depict their vision of the perfect community. Ask individuals or small groups to share their vision, and discuss some of the questions listed below.

2. **What are the similarities and differences between your vision and the community or neighborhood you live in now?**

3. **What could you do to make your community or neighborhood the one you envisioned?**

continued on back

4. **Are there people or organizations already working to make these changes? What are they doing? Do they need help? What could you do to help them?**

   Variation: Ask the young people to do research on local organizations related to the areas of change they identified. This could include interviews, gathering of information, brochures, etc. or the preparation of reports/presentations on these organizations to share with the rest of the group.

5. **What skills or talents could you bring which would be helpful to these efforts? For example, you may have leadership qualities; enjoy working with senior citizens; believe in helping the environment; feel comfortable with young children; like to paint; play baseball, etc.**

6. **Write one personal goal related to your own involvement in your community that you have for yourself.**

   Variation: Ask the young people to write the goal they have for themselves on a postcard. After they participate in a service project or several weeks later send the postcard in the mail to remind them of this goal. After you have mailed the postcard follow up with the young people and ask them what they have done to reach their goal.

YOUR **COMMUNITY** AND **YOU**

Instructions:

Service has the power to affect you and your community. Respond to the following questions and think about what you can do and the impact your service can have on your community.

1. **What is your dream or vision of the perfect community or neighborhood?**

2. **What are the similarities and differences between your vision and the community or neighborhood you live in now?**

3. **What could you do to make your community or neighborhood the one you envisioned?**

continued on back

4. **Are there people or organizations already working to make these changes? What are they doing? Do they need help? What could you do to help them?**

5. **What skills or talents could you bring which would be helpful to these efforts? For example, you may have leadership qualities; enjoy working with senior citizens; believe in helping the environment; feel comfortable with young children; have an artistic talent; etc.**

6. **Write one personal goal related to your own involvement in your community that you have for yourself.**

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COMMUNITY SERVICE OR SERVICE-LEARNING?

Facilitator Instructions:

If you are working in conjunction with young people who are doing service as part of their classroom education it may be important for them to understand what service-learning is and how it relates to community service. These discussion questions can be used individually, in small groups or in a large group. For more information on service-learning see *Today's Heroes in the Classroom.*

1. **How would you define community service? Give an example of community service.**

   Variation: Put the word community service in the middle of a piece of paper and have the young people map out words that help them define community service.

   Variation: Have each young person interview one or two other people about what they think community service is and report back to the full group what they found out.

2. **How would you define service-learning? Give an example of service-learning.**

   Variation: Put the word service-learning in the middle of a piece of paper and have the young people map out words that help them define service-learning.

   Variation: Have each young person interview one or two other people about what they think service-learning is and report back to the full group what they found out.

continued on back

3. What are the similarities and differences between community service and service-learning?

4. Which do you like better community service or service-learning? Why?

5. Have you ever been part of a group that did community service? (This may include scouts, 4-H, a neighborhood club, food or clothing drive at school, a youth group, etc.) What did you do? What could you do to make this community service project a service-learning project?

COMMUNITY SERVICE OR **SERVICE-LEARNING?**

Instructions:

Community service or service-learning? While they sound similar there are important differences between these two terms. Please respond to the following questions.

1. **How would you define community service? Give an example of community service.**

2. **How would you define service-learning? Give an example of service-learning.**

3. **What are the similarities and differences between community service and service-learning?**

continued on back

4. **Which do you like better community service or service-learning? Why?**

5. **Have you ever been part of a group that did community service? (This may include scouts, 4-H, a neighborhood club, food or clothing drive at school, a youth group, etc.) What did you do? What could you do to make this community service project a service-learning project?**

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Facilitator instructions:

It is important for young people to understand the "how" as well as the "what" and the "why" of service. These questions may be useful in helping young people plan a service project. The easiest way to get somewhere is to follow a map. The following questions and activities provide young people an opportunity to develop their own service roadmap.

1. **What issues are important to you? What do you think the community needs?**

Variation: If you are working with a group of young people ask each individual to identify one issue she/he would like to impact or change in their community. Have each person share their issues with the group. Look for issues of common interest.

Variation: Have the young people develop a survey they can share with other young people or community members to gather information about needs or issues facing the community.

Variation: Have the young people conduct a "walkabout," in which they walk around the community and take notes on what they observe and talk to people they meet about what they see as community needs. Once this information has been gathered, have the young people report back in teams or individually about what they found.

Variation: Have students spend a week reading and clipping newspaper articles which outline issues which are important or are facing the community. Ask individual young people or groups to develop collages to share what they learned about issues facing the community.

Variation: Once students have identified possible issues and ways to affect these issues, have groups of young people develop skits which act out these problems. For example, young people might identify teen-on-teen violence as an issue facing the community. Have the students act out a confrontation between two groups of young people. Ask students how they felt being part of the issue, or what could they have done to change what happened or to prevent this from happening in the future?

continued on back

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2. **What could you do to affect the issue or need you identified? Make a list of ideas and suggestions.**

3. **Which of these ideas could become service projects?**

   Variation: Once the young people have narrowed down the issues, ask the group to brainstorm possible service project ideas or agencies with whom they could talk.

4. **Who might already be working on these issues? Who else or what organizations could assist you in planning this project?**

5. **Whom would this project help?**

6. **What would you need to do to make this project happen? (e.g., who would you need to call, what supplies would you need)**

DEVELOPING A **SERVICE PROJECT ROADMAP**

Instructions:

Developing a service project can be simple. To the right are some questions that can assist you in planning for a project.

1. **What issues are important to you? What do you think the community needs?**

2. **What could you do to affect the issue or need you identified? Make a list of ideas and suggestions.**

3. **Which of these ideas could become service projects?**

continued on back

4. **Who might already be working on these issues? Who else or what organizations could assist you in planning this project?**

5. **Whom would this project help?**

6. **What would you need to do to make this project happen? (e.g., who would you need to call, what supplies would you need)**

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Facilitator instructions:

The following statements are quotes from the video. This activity is best introduced in a classroom or group setting where the *Today's Heroes* video has recently been viewed.

After seeing the *Today's Heroes* video, have the students break up into four groups. Give each group one of the quotes to read, analyze and discuss. Some possible starter questions are listed to the right.

Encourage each group to choose a spokesperson to be an expert on their specific statement. Create a "Talk Show" atmosphere, letting other young people respond, contribute thoughts, engage in a healthy dialogue about the quotes. The discussion doesn't have to be limited to these four statements.

Allow the young people to give personal accounts, brainstorm ideas for service projects, develop strategies for volunteering, and share their reflections with the entire classroom audience.

"Inside me, there was always something that made me real happy by giving something away instead of receiving it." Pedro.

"Look a little closer and ask, what is the problem in our area and what can we do about it?" Tony.

"I really believe what happens to these children is gonna affect what happens to me." Juanita.

"My grades weren't straight A's. I didn't excel in sports. I can't sing or dance. I think everybody finds something eventually they feel good at doing. It makes me feel that I must be a special person in some way to make this little girl open up to me and no one else." Hope.

1. **What do you think this quote means?**

2. **How could this quote apply to another service project?**

continued on back

For more information on the benefits of youth volunteering see *Today's Heroes in the Community.*

3. **What does this quote say about the person who made this statement?**

4. **Would this quote be important to your classroom, school or community? Why?**

5. **Does this statement have a universal message? Give some examples of personal experiences that come to mind when you hear this statement.**

6. **Does this quote make you want to become involved as a volunteer? Do you want to touch the lives of others?**

Instructions:

The following statements are quotes from the video.

"Inside me, there was always something that made me real happy by giving something away instead of receiving it." Pedro.

"Look a little closer and ask, what is the problem in our area and what can we do about it?" Tony.

"I really believe what happens to these children is gonna affect what happens to me." Juanita.

"My grades weren't straight A's. I didn't excel in sports. I can't sing or dance. I think everybody finds something eventually they feel good at doing. It makes me feel that I must be a special person in some way to make this little girl open up to me and no one else." Hope.

Instructions:

Choose one of the above statements and answer the questions to the right:

1. **What do you think this quote means?**

2. **How could this quote apply to another service project?**

3. **What does this quote say about the person who made this statement?**

continued on back

4. **Would this quote be important to your classroom, school or community? Why?**

5. **Does this statement have a universal message? Give some examples of personal experiences that come to mind when you hear this statement.**

6. **Does this quote make you want to become involved as a volunteer? Do you want to touch the lives of others?**

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The *Today's Heroes* project is a partnership of the Hitachi Foundation, The National Youth Leadership Council and The Points of Light Foundation.

In November of 1985, Hitachi, Ltd. of Tokyo established The Hitachi Foundation in Washington, D.C. as a nonprofit, philanthropic organization with a mission to promote social responsibility through effective participation in a global society. With a $28 million endowment, the Foundation maintains a $2.3 million annual giving program, making grants nationally to U.S. nonprofit organizations for projects in education, community development, and global citizenship. Since 1985, the Foundation has awarded grants totalling more than $15 million.

The Hitachi Foundation

The Hitachi Foundation
1509 22nd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037-1073
(202) 457-0588

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Founded in 1983, the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) is a Minnesota-based national nonprofit organization which works to integrate youth leadership and service learning practices into elementary, secondary and post-secondary school. The mission of NYLC is to engage and connect young people to communities and schools through innovations in learning, leadership, service and public policy.

NYLC
NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The National Youth Leadership Council
1910 West County Road B
Roseville, MN 55113
(612) 631-3672

...

The Points of Light Foundation is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed to encouraging the American public to volunteer community service. The Foundation's mission is to engage more people more effectively in volunteer community service to help solve serious social problems. Through its Youth and Education Outreach, the Foundation works to make the nation ready for young people to participate in the service ethic.

POINTS OF LIGHT

The Points of Light Foundation
Youth and Education Outreach
1737 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 223-9186

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